

Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund

Fiscal Year 2013 Annual Report

Prepared by the Rural Maryland Council
June 2013

Overview: Rural-serving nonprofit organizations and community colleges often lack access to the public and private sector philanthropic opportunities they need to obtain important programmatic and special project funding. Moreover, local governments, especially those in economically distressed rural regions, do not have the financial wherewithal to fully address these important developmental needs. Consequently, a serious resource deficit exists where the need has often been the greatest.

The Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) was established in 2000 to offer financial assistance to rural-serving nonprofit organizations that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education. In addition, MAERDAF offers grants to community colleges that support small and agricultural businesses with enhanced training and technical assistance.

Funding for MAERDAF grants comes from a General Fund appropriation through the Governor and General Assembly, as well as Special Funds from Racing Fund revenues, which typically fluctuate from year to year. For FY 2013, the total grant pool from both sources was \$195,956. (See details below.)

Grantees are selected by a six-member interagency Grant Review Board whose members are appointed by the Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the Rural Maryland Council. The decisions of the Grant Review Board are binding.

2013 MAERDAF Grant Review Board:

- *Raquel Samson, Director, Office of Primary Care, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene*
- *Mindie Burgoyne, Upper Shore Senior Business Development Representative, Department of Business and Economic Development*
- *Dona Sorce, Program Manager, Department of Housing and Community Development*
- *Emily Wilson, Director of Land Acquisition and Planning, Department of Natural Resources*
- *Karen Fedor, Senior Agricultural Marketing Specialist, Department of Agriculture*
- *Sharan Marshall, Director, Southern Maryland Regional Library Association*

MAERDAF Coordinator:

- *Charlotte Davis, Executive Director, Rural Maryland Council*

MAERDAF in Fiscal Year 2013

Between FY 2001 and FY 2013, the MAERDAF program has awarded \$2,682,705 in grants to 53 rural-serving nonprofit organizations. Unfortunately, due to the economy, there was no funding for MAERDAF in Fiscal Year 2012. However, the Rural Maryland Council was pleased to receive \$167,000 in a General Fund Appropriation for MAERDAF in Fiscal Year 2013. The Council was also pleased to receive supplemental MAERDAF funding from a Special Fund disbursement of daily license fees, impact aid, pari-mutuel taxes, un-cashed pari-mutuel tickets and other permit fees in the horse racing industry. This additional \$28,956 brought the total FY 2013 MAERDAF funding to \$195,956.

The average MAERDAF grant over the life of the program has been \$16,842; however, in FY 2013, the average grant was \$17,814. During FY 2013, the MAERDAF Grants Review Board received 22 grant applications requesting \$417,587 in funding. The Board selected 11 rural-serving nonprofit organizations to receive the \$195,956 in available funding.

FY 2013 MAERDAF GRANTEES				
Applicant	Category	Area Served	Amount Requested	Amount Approved
Allegany College of Maryland	Ag/Forestry	Western MD	\$24,122	\$16,812
Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center	Health/EconDev	Eastern Shore	\$14,098	\$14,098
Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation	Ag/Forestry	Western MD	\$18,749	\$18,749
Lead Maryland	Ag/Forestry	Statewide	\$25,000	\$25,000
Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council	CommDev	Eastern Shore	\$23,610	\$18,610
Maintaining Active Citizens	Health/EconDev	Eastern Shore	\$25,000	\$25,000
Maryland Capital Enterprises	Health/EconDev	Eastern Shore	\$25,000	\$12,556
Maryland Rural Health Association	Health/EconDev	Statewide	\$30,000	\$10,000
Mid-Shore Regional Council	Ag/Forestry	Eastern Shore	\$24,005	\$18,731
Southern Maryland Agricultural Commission	Ag/Forestry	Southern Maryland	\$17,400	\$17,400
Upper Shore Regional Council	Ag/Forestry	Eastern Shore	\$25,000	\$19,000
		TOTAL	\$239,540	\$195,956

The MAERDAF Program has helped many rural-serving organizations establish or continue programs and projects that have had a significant and positive impact on Rural Maryland. In addition, the modest state investment in the MAERDAF program has helped the nonprofit sector leverage a substantial amount of private and federal financial support. (The MAERDAF Board is required to give preference to organizations that leverage non-state matching funds.) Moreover, MAERDAF has helped many of these nonprofit service providers develop institutional capacity, improve grant-writing skills, and enhance the internal development of volunteer boards and staff.

FY 2013 MAERDAF Grantees By Region				
	# Grantees	Amount Requested	Total Awarded	% of grant funds awarded
Eastern Shore	6	\$136,713	\$107,995	55%
Southern Maryland	1	\$17,400	\$17,400	9%
Western Maryland	2	\$42,871	\$35,561	18%
Statewide	2	\$55,000	\$35,000	18%
Total	11	\$218,517	\$144,912	100%

FY 2013 MAERDAF Grantees by Category				
	# Grantees	Amount Requested	Total Awarded	% of grant funds awarded
Agricultural and forestry	6	\$ 134,276	\$115,692	59%
Community Development	1	\$23,610	\$18,610	9%
Health and Economic Development	4	\$94,098	\$61,654	32%
Total	11	\$218,517	\$144,912	100%

FY 2013 – MAERDAF Grantees Scopes of Work

Allegany College of Maryland – Award Amount: \$16,812 (Amount Requested: \$24,122)

Summary: Allegany College of Maryland is a lifelong learning community dedicated to excellence in education and responsive to the changing needs of the communities it serves.

Grant funds were used to facilitate communications between the college and high schools throughout rural Maryland that may not be aware of the college’s Forest Technology Program or careers in the profession.

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center – Award Amount: \$14,098 (Amount Requested: \$14,098)

Summary: The Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) is a nonprofit organization that works to establish and enhance the development of entrepreneurial ecosystems through the rural counties of

Maryland's Eastern Shore (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester) for the purpose of new business formation, job growth, and wealth creation. Grant Funds were used to establish a useful and valuable web portal focused on entrepreneurship in Maryland's rural areas. The grants will be used for initial expansion of the portal and its content on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation, Inc. – Award Amount: \$18,749 (Amount Requested: \$18,749)

Summary: The Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation is dedicated to utilizing experiential learning to provide rural Maryland's young people with the knowledge and practical experience to sustain themselves and the environment and to compete in today's economy.

Grant Funds were used to provide experiential learning in sustainable agriculture and forestry to students and increase their environmental literacy. The grant funds will be used to implement construction of a hoop house or high tunnel.

LEAD Maryland Foundation, Inc. – Award Amount: \$25,000 (Amount Requested: \$25,000)

Summary: LEAD Maryland Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to identifying and developing leadership for agriculture, natural resources, and rural communities.

Grant funds will allow LEAD Maryland Foundation to begin work with a new class of Fellows. The Fellows will be enrolled into a two-year program to increase their assurance, skills, and knowledge for mobilizing people to address the above mentioned examples of change, and other relevant issues. The grant funds will be used for Seminars 1, 2 and 3.

Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council – Award Amount: \$18,610 (Amount Requested: \$23,610)

Summary: The Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council is dedicated to preserve, protect, and promote the historical, cultural, and natural heritage of Maryland's Somerset, Worcester, and Wicomico counties.

Grant funds will be used to strengthen public knowledge and economic development through heritage development. The grant funds will be used to develop a marketing program, offer a regional workshop, and enable a more comprehensive presence at events.

Maintaining Active Citizens, Inc. – Award Amount: \$25,000 (Amount Requested: \$25,000)

Summary: MAC, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to offering older persons lives of independence, dignity and choice. MAC, Inc. is committed to preserving the quality of life for seniors in the community.

Grant Funds will be used to continue work on a program entitled "Living Well in Your Rural Environment", a health promotion program to improve quality of life for the seniors residing in the rural Lower and Mid Eastern Shore region. Specifically, this program will produce and offer free educational materials on environmental illnesses, provide access for individual patients to receive medical and environmental consultations with recommendations for treatment and offer aqua therapy classes to all participants to decrease pain and improve functional mobility, endurance and strength.

Maryland Capital Enterprises, Inc. – Award Amount: \$12,556 (Amount Requested: \$25,000)

Summary: Maryland Capital Enterprises, Inc. is a non-profit, micro-enterprise lending/assistance program with the express purpose of bringing micro-enterprise building and support services to traditionally underserved minority and low/moderate income entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Grant funds will provide counseling, training and mentoring to at least ten of its members at the co-working office at the Tri-County Council Center in Salisbury. Workshops will include business planning, accounting, marketing and use of technology.

Maryland Rural Health Association – Award Amount: \$10,000 (Amount Requested: \$30,000)

Summary: Maryland Rural Health Association is a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate and advocate for the optimal health of rural communities and their residents.

Grant funds will provide technical assistance to rural communities and partner agencies that are applying to become a Health Enterprise Zone (HEZ). The grant funds will be used to work with MRHA membership, identify a rural specific researcher, and conduct a webinar or other technical assistance to help members with the application process.

Mid-Shore Regional Council – Award Amount: \$18,731 (Amount Requested: \$24,005)

Summary: The Mid-Shore Regional Council serves the businesses and residents of Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties by initiating and coordinating plans and projects for the development of human and economic resources.

Grant funds will be used to increase Shore Gourmet’s marketing and distribution efforts in addition to the myriad of consulting practices it engages and facilitates for the value-added producers it assists. Shore Gourmet will create new jobs and help resource-based small businesses retain and increase their viability.

Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission – Award Amount: \$17,400 (Amount Requested: \$17,400)

Summary: The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission promotes diverse, market-driven agricultural enterprises which coupled with agricultural land preservation, will preserve Southern Maryland’s environmental resources and rural character while keeping the region’s farmland productive and the agricultural economy vibrant.

Grant funds will be used to encourage farmers; markets to accept SNAP benefits and utilize a wireless EBT system. They will also to provide administrative support, stipends for onsite management, outreach and support for incentive dollars.

Upper Shore Regional Council – Award Amount: \$19,000 (Amount Requested: \$25,000)

Summary: The Upper Shore Regional Council fosters regional planning and development for Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne’s counties.

Grant funds will enable the Upper Shore Regional Council to produce the Upper Shore harvest Directory to promote agricultural producers in the region. They will also be used to update all information on agricultural producers and add seafood producers, improve the website, redo the marketing brochure, and offer market analysis service to each producer.

MAERDAF is administered by the Rural Maryland Council, an independent state agency and federally designated State Rural Development Council under the USDA’s National Rural Development Partnership. Its mission is to bring together federal, state, county and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to craft public policy, programmatic or regulatory solutions. As a collaborative partnership, the RMC operates under the guidance of a 40-member Executive Board, in a nonpartisan and nondiscriminatory manner.



For more information, visit the RMC’s website at: www.rural.state.md.us

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